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TESTIMONY ON HB 6604
ENERGY & TECHNOLOGY COMMITTEE
MARCH 5, 2009

Representative Nardello, Senator Fonfara, members of the Energy & Technology Committee, I wish to testify in favor of HB 6604, "AN ACT CONCERNING PUBLIC ACCESS TELEVISION CHANNELS" (and particularly sections 1 through 7 of the bill), which contains provisions to help public access television.

Last year, this committee spent a lot of effort on a comprehensive bill to address various issues affecting public access television. Ultimately, a few sections of that bill passed in another form, but many worthwhile provisions did not pass. Sections 1 through 7 of this bill contain many of those provisions:

- Section 1 empowers community antenna television advisory councils to mediate public access television disputes (in line 1 and line 16, "community antenna television advisory" should replace "local cable access").
- Sections 2 and 3 allow employees of public access television providers to serve on community antenna television advisory councils.
- Section 4 requires cable television companies to continue to support public access television providers as they did on January 1, 2008.
- Section 5 requires cable television companies to continue to honor all statutory public access television requirements.
- Section 6 clarifies that the so-called "PEG-PETIA" grant program, established in PA 07-253, applies only to public access television providers.
- Section 7 requires cable television companies to support the same number of public access television channels that they supported as of January 1, 2008.

These provisions enjoyed unanimous support and cost the public nothing. I urge the committee to act favorably on this bill. Thanks for your consideration.